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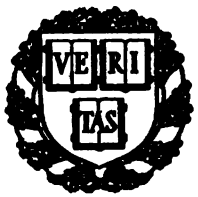

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Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolsey?

by

Richard Rees

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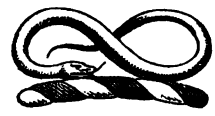
"Yet no man remembered that same POOR man."



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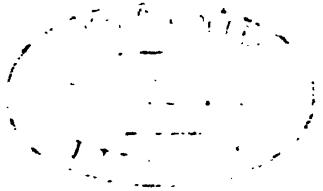

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TO

W—— R——, Esq.

THIS TRIFLE IS INSCRIBED:

A MEMORIAL OF

HIGH RESPECT,

EARLY FRIENDSHIP,

AND

CONGENIAL STUDIES.

Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolley?

WHEN a writer undertakes to give *cuique suum* in a question of literary property, if he would avoid the ridicule which they deservedly incur who raise a controversy only that they may have the honour of settling it, he must show that there are more claimants than one on the property he means to assign.

This then will be our first object.

To whom the Biographia attributes it.

Let the reader turn to the 'Biographia Britannica,' and look out the article 'Sir William Cavendish.' He will find in either of the editions what follows in the words of Dr. Campbell, the original projector of that work, or of his friend Mr. Morant, the historian of Essex[1], for it does not appear that the later editors have either reconsidered the

[1] Of the *latter*, says the ingenious annotator on the letters lately published from the Bodleian Library, vol. i. p. 144 n.; but does not the signature C point out Dr. Campbell as the writer of this article? See what is said of the change of signatures in the second edition; preface to the 1st vol. p. xx.

article, or added to it any thing material. Sir William Cavendish, we are told, "had a liberal education given him by his father, who settled upon him also certain lands in the county of Suffolk; but made a much better provision for him by procuring him to be admitted into the family of the great Cardinal Wolsey, upon whom he waited in quality of gentleman usher of his chamber."——"As Mr. Cavendish was the Cardinal's countryman, and the Cardinal had a great kindness for his father, he took him early into his confidence, and showed him upon all occasions very particular marks of kindness and respect[a]." Several extracts from the Life of Wolsey are then produced to show the honourable nature of this employment. Mr. Cavendish's faithful adherence to Wolsey in his fall receives due encomium: and we are then favoured with a detail of Mr. Cavendish's public services after the Cardinal's death, his rich rewards, his knighthood, marriages, and issue, in which the writer of the article has followed Sir William Dugdale, and the Peerages. Towards the conclusion Cavendish is spoken of in his character of an author, a character which alone could entitle him to admission into that temple of British worthies. We are told that "he appears from his *writings* to

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[a] Kippis's Edit. vol. iii. p. 321.

have been a man of great honour and integrity, a good subject to his prince, a true lover of his country, and one who preserved to the last a very high reverence and esteem for his old master and first patron Cardinal Wolsey, *whose life he wrote in the latter part of his own*, and there gives him a very high character."——" This work of his remained long in manuscript, and the *original* some years ago was in the hands of the Duke of Kingston, supposed to be given by the author to his daughter who married into that family. It had been seen and consulted by the Lord Herbert when he wrote his history of the reign of King Henry VIII., but *he was either unacquainted with our author's Christian name, or mistook him for his elder brother George Cavendish of Glemsford in the county of Suffolk, Esq.* for by that name his lordship calls him: but it appears plainly from what he says that the history he made use of was our author's." p. 324.

To whom, Lord Herbert.

Such is the reputation in which the Biographia Britannica is held in the world, and indeed not undeservedly, that most writers of English biography have recourse to it for information: and with its authority those among them are usually well satisfied, who neither value, nor are willing to undertake, the toilsome researches of the genealogist and the antiquary. Another such work, for a certain class of

English worthies, is 'The Peerage of England,' begun by the respectable and ill-rewarded Arthur Collins, and continued by successive editors with as much exactness as could reasonably have been expected. The several editions of this work from that of 1712, in one volume, to that of 1812, in nine, contain the same account of Sir William Cavendish's attendance upon Wolsey, of his tried attachment to him, and of his lasting gratitude to the memory of his old master, displayed in writing apologetical memoirs of his life. At the very opening of the pages devoted to the Devonshire family, in the recent edition of this work, we are told that "the potent and illustrious family of Cavendish, of which, in the last century, two branches arrived at dukedoms, laid the foundation of their future greatness, first, on the share of abbey lands obtained at the dissolution of monasteries by Sir William Cavendish, who had been gentleman usher to Cardinal Wolsey, who died in 1557, and afterwards by the abilities, the rapacity, and the good fortune of Elizabeth his widow, who remarried George Earl of Shrewsbury, and died in 1607[3]." And afterwards, in the account of the said Sir William Cavendish, we are told nearly in the words used by Dr. Camp-

To whom, the Peerages.

[3] Vol. i. p. 302.

bell, that "to give a more lasting testimony of his gratitude to the Cardinal, he drew up a fair account of his life and death, which he wrote in the reign of Queen Mary; whereof the oldest copy is in the hands of the noble family of Pierrepoint, into which the author's daughter was married. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in the Life and Reign of King Henry VIII., quotes the manuscript in many places, *but mentions George Cavendish to be the author of it; which, from divers circumstances, we may conclude to be a mistake.* In the year 1641 it was printed, and again in 1667[4]." A full account is then given of the public employments and honourable rewards of Sir William Cavendish; and the descent of the two ducal families of Devonshire and Newcastle from this most fortunate subject is set forth with all due regard to genealogical accuracy.

Sir William Cavendish generally understood to be the author.

From these two great public reservoirs of English biography this account of Sir William Cavendish, both as an author and a man, has been drawn off into innumerable other works. Writers of high authority in affairs of this nature have adopted it; and even historians of the life of Wolsey, upon whom it appeared to be incumbent to make accurate inquiry into this subject, have retailed as unquestioned

[4] Vol. i. p. 314.

truth what the Biographia and the Peerages have told us concerning an author to whose most faithful and interesting narrative they have been so largely indebted. Sir William Cavendish may therefore be regarded as the tenant in possession of this property: nor, as far as I know, hath his right ever been formally controverted. Before the reader has got to the last page of this little treatise he will probably have seen reason to conclude that this account is *all fable:* for that Sir William Cavendish could not possibly have been the Cardinal's biographer, nor, of course, the faithful attendant upon him; that circumstance of his history proceeding entirely upon the supposition that he was the writer of the work in question[5].

but erroneously.

While we have thus brought before the public the person who may be considered as the *presumed proprietor* of this work, we have also made good our promise to show that there are more claimants than one upon this piece of literary property. Lord Herbert, we have seen, quotes the manuscript as the production of a *George* Cavendish. Other writers of no mean authority, as will be seen in the course of this disquisition, have attributed it to another member of the house of Cavendish, whose name was *Thomas.*

A third claimant.

5 See the marginal references in the Biographia and the Peerages.

The editors of the Biographia and the Peerages have made very light of my Lord Herbert's testimony. What those *divers circumstances* were which led the latter to reject it, as they have not informed us, so we must be content to remain in ignorance. The noble historian of the life and reign of Henry VIII. is not accustomed to quote his authorities at random. If he sometimes endeavour too much to palliate enormities which can neither be excused nor softened down, he is nevertheless generally correct as to the open fact, as he is always ingenious and interesting. Supported by so respectable an authority, the pretensions of this George Cavendish of Glemsford to have been the faithful attendant upon Wolsey, and the lively historian of his rise and fall, ought to have received a more patient examination. Descended of the same parents with Sir William, and by birth the elder, in fortune he was far behind him. At a period of great uncertainty the two brothers took opposite courses. William was for reform, George for existing circumstances. Contrary to the ordinary course of events, the first was led to wealth and honours, the latter to mediocrity and obscurity. The former yet lives in a posterity not less distinguished by personal merit than by the splendour cast upon them by the highest rank in the British peerage, the just reward

of meritorious services performed by a race of patriots their ancestors. Of the progeny from the other, history has no splendid deeds to relate; and, after the third generation, they are unknown to the herald and the antiquary. But this is to anticipate. I contend that the wreath of praise which he has justly deserved, who produces one of the most beautiful specimens of unaffected faithful biography that any language contains, has been torn from this *poor* man's brow, to decorate the temples of his more fortunate brother. To replace it is the object of the present publication. It will, I trust, be shown to the satisfaction of the reader, that this George Cavendish was the author of the work in question, and the disinterested attendant upon the fallen favourite. The illustrious house of Devonshire needs no borrowed merit to command the respect and admiration of the world.

George Cavendish the real author.

Let it not however be supposed that the writer is meaning to arrogate to himself the credit of being the first to dispute the right of Sir William Cavendish, and to advance the claim of the real owner. The possession which Sir William has had has not been an undisturbed one: so that were there any statute of limitations applicable to literary property, that statute would avail him nothing. The manuscript of this work, which now forms a part of

Writers who have advanced his claim.

the Harleian library, is described by the accurate Wanley as being from the pen of a *George* Cavendish[6]. In 1742 and the two following years, 'A History of the Life and Times of Cardinal Wolsey' was published in four volumes octavo by Mr. Joseph Grove, who subjoined, in the form of notes, the whole of what was then known to the public of these Memoirs; describing them in a running title, 'The Secret History of the Cardinal, by *George* Cavendish, Esq.:' but, as if to show that no one who touched this subject should escape defilement from the errors of the Biographia and the Peerages, he confounds together the two brothers in the account he gives of the author at the 98th page of his third volume. During the remainder of the last century it does not appear that Sir William Cavendish suffered any material molestation in his possession of this property: but in the present century Mr. Francis Douce, in his most curious 'Illustrations of Shakspeare,' restores to *George* Cavendish the honour of having produced this work, and marks by significative *Italics* that it was an honour which another had usurped[7]. Dr. Wordsworth may also be ranked amongst those writers who have ventured to put a spade into Sir William's estate. To this gentle-

Wanley. Grove. Douce. Wordsworth.

[6] Catalogue Harl. MSS. No. 428.

[7] Vol. ii. p. 51.

man belongs the merit of having first presented to the public an impression of this work, which conveys any just idea of the original[8]. In an advertisement he expresses himself thus cautiously as to the name of the author: "The following life was written by the Cardinal's gentleman-usher, Cavendish, whose Christian name in the superscription to some of the manuscript copies is *George*, but by Bishop Kennet, in his Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish, by Collins in his Peerage, and by Dr. Birch (No. 4233,

A collation of MSS. wanted.

[8] In his 'Ecclesiastical Biography; or Lives of eminent Men connected with the History of Religion in England,' 6 vols. 8vo. an useful and valuable collection. Much however is yet to be done by the collation of manuscripts before the public can be said to be in full possession of this interesting biographical work. In the edition of 1667 is an advertisement to the reader beginning "Who pleaseth to read this history advisedly," &c. and ending, "And thus was his honour laid in the dust;" which appears to belong to the work, though not found in Dr. Wordsworth's impression. And again, there is a paragraph in Dr. Wordsworth's publication of it, p. 546, beginning "Here is the end and fall of pride and arrogancy of man," &c. in which Wolsey is spoken of in terms so different from those used in other parts of the book, that there is some reasonable doubt whether it is not an interpolation. Dr. Wordsworth very properly rejects the parenthesis, "at which time it was apparent that he had poisoned himself," which had been introduced into the printed copies without the authority of the manuscripts. The editor of the Censura Literaria once intimated his intention to prepare an edition of this work. (C. L. iii. 372.) How could the press of Lee Priory, of whose powers we have just had so favourable a specimen, be more worthily engaged than in producing a correct edition of this valuable piece of antiquarian lore,—except in favouring the public with more of its able director's own classical and beautiful essays?

Ayscough's Catalogue Brit. Museum) he is called *William*[9]." Had the learned editor pursued the question thus started, it is probable he would have been led to the conclusion which will here be brought out, and have thus rendered wholly unnecessary the disquisition now tendered to the notice of the public. But here he has suffered the matter to rest.

Doubts of Sir William Cavendish's right to this work gained not much credit in the world.

And indeed, to say the truth, though there may possibly have been two or three other writers who have intimated a doubt as to the right of Sir William Cavendish to the work in question, these doubts seem never to have gained hold on the public attention. It would be an invidious task to collect together the many modern supporters of his claim: there are, amongst them, names who have deservedly attained a high degree of celebrity as historians, antiquaries, topographers, and biographers. All the writer wishes is, that he may stand excused with the public in offering what he has collected upon this point: and if the concession is made that the suspicions of Sir William Cavendish's right to this piece of biography have never gained much hold on the public mind, and that it is a prevailing opinion in the world that the greatness in which we now behold the house of Devonshire owes its origin

[9] Vol. i. p. 321.

to a train of fortunate circumstances resulting out of an attendance on Cardinal Wolsey, he must consider himself as amply excused.

Let us now hear the evidence.

Authorities in his favour;

The learned editor of the 'Ecclesiastical Biography' has mentioned several *names* as supporters of Sir William's claim. And indeed, if *names* might carry the day, Kennet and Collins, Birch and Campbell, are in themselves a host. But who is there accustomed to close and minute investigation, that has not discovered for himself, of how little moment is *simple authority* in any question? It is, especially, of little weight in historical and antiquarian discussion. The most laborious may sometimes overlook evidence which is afterwards accidentally discovered to another of far inferior pretensions: the most accurate may mistake: the most faithful may be bribed into inattention by supposititious facts, which give a roundness and compactness to what, without them, forms but an imperfect narration. The case before us may possibly come under the latter head. Take away the attendance upon Wolsey, and we have several years unaccounted for in the life of Sir William Cavendish; and lose what the mind perceives to be a step by which a private gentleman, as he was, might advance himself into the councils of princes, and the possession of im-

portant offices of state. There is in this what might lay a general biographer, who was a very Argus, asleep. But these authorities, it must also be observed, are all *moderns:* they lived a century and a half after both the Cavendishes had been gathered to their fathers: and earlier biographers, who have made mention of this founder of two ducal houses, have said nothing of any attendance upon the Cardinal, never ascribed the flourishing state of his fortunes to any recommendation of him to the king from his old master, nor taken any notice of what is so much to his honour, that he adhered faithfully to Wolsey in his fall, and produced this beautiful tribute to his memory. Negative evidence of this kind, it may be said, is of no great weight. It will be allowed, however, to be of some, when it is recollected who they are that have omitted these *leading particulars* in Sir William Cavendish's history. They are no other than the author of 'The Baronage of England,' and Margaret Dutchess of Newcastle, who has given a laboured genealogy of the ancestors and kindred of her lord, a grandson of Sir William Cavendish, annexed to the very entertaining memoirs which she left of his life. The *omissions* of two such writers, living at the time when this work was first made public, and whose duty as well as inclination it would have been to

all modern.

Dugdale and the Dutchess of Newcastle do not ascribe it to him.

have mentioned the fact had it been so, will at least serve to weigh against the positive but unsupported testimonies of the above-mentioned respectable writers, all of whom lived much too late to be supposed to have received any information by private tradition.

The original MS. said to be in the hands of the Pierrepoint family.

But the *original* manuscript was in the hands of the Pierrepoint family, and into that family Sir William Cavendish's daughter was married. Possibly; but were it even so, it is obvious that this lays but a very insufficient foundation for believing that Sir William was the author. It might have been given to Frances Cavendish by George Cavendish her uncle. But Dr. Kennet, upon whose authority this statement has been made, has not informed us by what criterion he was guided in assigning that priority to the Pierrepoint manuscript which this statement assumes. There are so many manuscripts of this work abroad, that it must, I presume, be exceedingly difficult to decide which has the best claim to be the author's autograph, if indeed that autograph be in existence. Scarcely any work of this magnitude, composed after the invention of printing, has been so often transcribed. There is a

Manuscripts;

copy in the cathedral library at York which once belonged to Archbishop Matthew; another very valuable one in the library of the College of Arms,

presented to that learned society by Henry Duke of Norfolk; another in Mr. Douce's collection; another in the public library at Cambridge; another in the Bodleian. There are two in Mr. Heber's library; two at Lambeth; two in the British Museum. The reason of this multiplication of copies by the laborious process of transcription seems to have been this: the work was composed in the days of Queen Mary by a zealous catholic, but not committed to the press in her short reign. It contained a very favourable representation of the conduct of a man who was held in but little esteem in the days of her successor, and whom it was then almost traitorous to praise. The conduct of several persons was reflected on who were flourishing themselves, or in their immediate posterity, in the court of Queen Elizabeth: and it contained also the freest censures of the Reformation, and very strong remarks upon the conduct and character of Anne Boleyn, the Cardinal's great enemy. It is probable that no printer could be found who had so little fear of the Star-Chamber before his eyes as to venture the publication of a work so obnoxious: while such was the gratification which all persons of taste and reading would find in it, from its fidelity, its curious minuteness, its lively details, and above all, from that unaffected air of sweet natural eloquence in which it

reason of their multiplication.

is composed, that many among them must have been desirous of possessing it. Can we wonder then that so many copies should have been taken between the time when it was written and the year 1641, when it was first sent to the press: or that one of these copies should have found its way into the library of Henry Pierrepoint Marquis of Dorchester, who was an author, and a man of some taste and learning[10]? It cannot surely be difficult to divine how it came into his possession, without supposing that it was brought into his family by Sir William's daughter, his grandmother, Frances Cavendish.

Trifling as it appears, we have now had nearly all that has been alleged as rendering it probable that Sir William Cavendish was the author of this work. We have no evidence in his favour from any early catalogue of writers in English history: nor any testimony in inscription or title upon any of the manuscripts, except a modern one by Dr. Birch upon one of the Museum copies. But in appropriating any literary composition to its author, that evidence is the most conclusive which is derived from the work itself. This is the kind of proof to

No evidence in his favour from the MSS.

[10] See the 'Royal and Noble Authors,' p. 202. and Fasti Oxon. vol. ii. col. 706. ed. 1692.

which it is proposed to bring the claims of the two competitors. It is contended that there are passages in the work, and self-notices, which are absolutely inconsistent with the supposition that it was the production of the person to whom it has usually been ascribed. Let us attend to these.

Time when the work was written.

It will be of some importance to us to have clearly ascertained the period at which this work was composed. We have information sufficient for this purpose. At page 350 of Dr. Wordsworth's impression, we read that the Cardinal "was sent twice on an embassage unto the Emperor Charles the Fifth that now reigneth, and father unto King Philip, now our soveraign lord." Mary queen of England was married to Philip of Spain on the 25th of July 1554. Again, at page 401, we hear of "Mr. Ratcliffe, who was sonne and heire to the Lord Fitzwalter, and nowe Earle of Sussex." The Earl of Sussex of Queen Mary's reign, who had been son and heir to a Lord Fitzwalter in the days of King Henry VIII. could be no other than Henry Radcliffe, the second earl of that name, who died on the 17th of February 1557[11]. Without incurring any risk by following older authorities, when so much misconception is abroad, we may set down as

[11] Milles's Catalogue of Honour, p. 667.

fairly proved, that the Life of Wolsey was composed about the middle of the reign of Queen Mary[18].

The author a neglected man.

Now we may collect that the author, whoever he was, thought himself a *neglected* man at the time of writing. He tells us that he engaged in the work

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A supposed anachronism explained.

[18] The reader will, it is hoped, excuse the *minuteness* of this inquiry. We have enough to teach us to take nothing upon trust that has been said concerning this work: and some doubts have been expressed as to the period at which it was written, grounded on a passage near the conclusion. Cavendish tells us that when the Cardinal left the hospitable mansion of the Earl of Shrewsbury at Sheffield, on the borders of Yorkshire, "he tooke his journey, with Mr. Kingstone and them of the guarde. And as sone as they espied him, considering that he was their olde master, and in such estate, they lamented his misfortune with weping eyes. Whome my lord toke by the hand, and many times, as he rode by the way, he would talke, nowe with one, then with an other, until he came to *an house of my Lord of Shrewsbury's called Hardewicke hall*, where he lay all that nighte, very evill at ease. The next day he rode to Nottingham, and there lodged that nighte, more sicke, and the next day he rode to Leicestre Abbey; and by the way he waxed so sicke that he was almost fallen from his mule." p. 536. This is an affecting picture. Shakspeare had undoubtedly seen these words, his portrait of the sick and dying Cardinal so closely resembling this. But in these words is this chronological difficulty. How is it that Hardwick-hall is spoken of as a house of the Earl of Shrewsbury's in the reign of Henry VIII. or at least in the days of Queen Mary, when it is well known that the house of this name between Sheffield and Nottingham, in which the Countess of Shrewsbury spent her widowhood, a house described in the Anecdotes of Painting, and seen and admired by every curious traveller in Derbyshire, did not accrue to the possessions of any part of the Shrewsbury family till the marriage of an earl, who was grandson to the Cardinal's host, with Elizabeth Hardwick, the widow of Sir William Cavendish, in the time of Queen Elizabeth? If I recol-

to vindicate the memory of his master from "diverse sondrie surmises and imagined tales, made of his procedings and doings," which he himself had "perfectly knowen to be most untrue." We cannot however but discover, that he was also stimu-

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lect right, this difficulty perplexed that learned Derbyshire antiquary Dr. Samuel Pegge, who has written somewhat at length on the question, whether the Cardinal met his death in consequence of having taken poison. See Gent. Mag. vol. xxv. p. 27, and vol. liii. p. 751. The editor of the Topographer proposes to correct the text by reading Wingfield in place of Hardwick; vol. ii. p. 79. The truth, however, is, that though the story is told to every visitor of Hardwick-hall, that "the great child of honour, Cardinal Wolsey," slept there a few nights before his death; as is also the story, perhaps equally unfounded, that Mary Queen of Scots was confined there; it was another Hardwick which received the weary traveller for a night in this his last melancholy pilgrimage. This was Hardwick upon Line in Nottinghamshire, a place about as far to the south of Mansfield, as the Hardwick in Derbyshire, so much better known, is to the north-west. It is now gone to much decay, and is consequently omitted in many maps of the county. It is found in Speed. Here the Earl of Shrewsbury had a house in the time of Wolsey. Leland expressly mentions it. "The Erle [of Shrewsbury] hath a park and maner place or lodge yn it caullid Hardewike upon Line, a four miles from Newstede Abbay." Itin. vol. v. fol. 94. p. 108. Both the Hardwicks became afterwards the property of the Cavendishes. Thoroton tells us that Sir Charles Cavendish, youngest son of Sir William, and father of William Duke of Newcastle, "had begun to build a great house in this lordship, on a hill by the forest side, near Annesley-Woodhouse, when he was assaulted and wounded by Sir John Stanhope and his men, as he was viewing the work, which was therefore thought fit to be left off, some bloud being spilt in the quarrel, then very hot between the two families." Throsby's edit. vol. ii. p. 294.

lated by the desire of attracting attention to himself, the old and faithful domestic of a great man whose character was then beginning to retrieve itself in the eyes of an abused nation, and whose misfortunes had prevented him from advancing his servants in a manner accordant to his own wishes, and to the dignity of his service. He dwells with manifest complacency upon the words of commendation he received on different occasions from his master; and relates towards the conclusion how kindly he had been received by the king after the death of Wolsey, and what promises had been made to him both by Henry and the Duke of Norfolk, who yet suffered him to depart into his own country. But what shows most strikingly that he was an unsatisfied man, and thought that he had by no means had the reward due to his faithful services, is a remark he makes after having related the sudden elevation of Wolsey to the deanry of Lincoln. "Here," says he, "may all men note the chaunces of fortune that followethe some whome she intendeth to promote, and to some her favor is cleane contrary, though they travaille never so much, with all the painfull diligence that they can devise or imagine: *whereof for my part I have tasted of the experience.*" p. 332.

Not so Sir William Cavendish.

There are persons whom nothing will satisfy, and they are sometimes the most importunate in obtrud-

ing their supposed neglects upon the public: but it must surely have been past all endurance to have had such a complaint as this preferred by Sir William Cavendish in the days of Queen Mary. His life had been a continual series of promotions and lucrative employments. In 1530, the very year in the November of which the Cardinal died, he was constituted one of the commissioners for visiting and taking the surrenders of divers religious houses. In 1539 he was made one of the Auditors of the Court of Augmentations, then lately established. At this period of his life he was living luxuriously at his mansion of North Awbrey near Lincoln, as appears by the inventory of his furniture there, which is preserved in manuscript[13]. In the next year he had a royal grant of several lordships in the county of

His employments, promotions and rewards.

[13] It formed part of the curious collection of manuscripts made by the late John Wilson, Esq. of Bromhead near Sheffield, in Yorkshire; a gentleman who spent a long life in collecting, and transcribing where he could not procure possession of the original, whatever might throw any light upon the descent of property, or on the history, language, or manners of our ancestors. He was the intimate friend and correspondent of Burton, Watson, Brooke, Beckwith, and indeed of all that generation of Yorkshire antiquaries which passed away with the late Mr. Beaumont of Whitley Beaumont. Mr. Wilson died in 1783. Cavendish's library was not the best furnished apartment of his magnificent mansion. For the satisfaction of the gentle Bibliomaniac, I shall transcribe the brief catalogue of his books. "Chawcer, Froyssarte Cronicles, a boke of French and English." This was in 1540.

John Wilson of Bromhead.

Hertford. In 1546 he was knighted; constituted treasurer of the chamber to the king, a place of great trust and honour; and was soon afterwards admitted of the privy council. He continued to enjoy all these honours till his death, a space of eleven years, in which time his estate was much increased by the grants he received from King Edward VI. in seven several counties[14]. It was not surely for such a man as this to complain of the *ludibria fortunæ*, or of the little reward all his "painfull diligence" had received. Few men, as Sylvius says, would have such a "poverty of grace" that they would not

> "——— think it a most plenteous crop
> To glean the broken ears after the man
> That such a harvest reaps."

Sir William Cavendish began the world the younger son of a family of some respectability, but of no great wealth or consequence; and he left it, at about the age of fifty, a knight, a privy counsellor, and the owner of estates which, managed and improved as they were by his prudent relict, furnished two houses with the means of supporting in becoming splendour the very first rank in the British peerage.

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[14] The authorities for this detail of the employments, rewards, and honours of Sir William Cavendish are to be found in the Biographia and the Peerages.

But an ambitious man is not to be contented; and men do form erroneous estimates of their own deserts: let us see, then, if the work will not supply us with something more conclusive.

Zealous against the Reformation.

The writer is fond of bringing forward his religious sentiments. The reader will be amused with the following sally against the Reformation, its origin, and favourers. He who is disposed may find in it matter for serious reflection. When Cavendish has related that the king submitted to be cited by the two legates, and to appear in person before them, to be questioned touching the matter of the divorce, he breaks out into this exclamation:— "Forsoothe it is a world to consider the desirous will of wilfull princes, when they be set and earnestly bent to have their wills fulfilled, wherein no reasonable persuasions will suffice; and how little they regard the dangerous sequell that may ensue, as well to themselves as to their subjects. And above all things, there is nothing that maketh them more wilfull than carnall love and sensuall affection of voluptuous desire, and pleasures of their bodies, as was in this case; wherein nothing could be of greater experience than to see what inventions were furnished, what lawes were enacted, what costly edifications of noble and auncient monasteries were overthrowne, what diversity of opinions then rose, what

executions were then committed, how many noble clerkes and good men were then for the same put to deathe, and what alteration of good, auncient, and holesome lawes, customes, and charitable foundations were tourned from reliefe of the poore, to utter destruction and desolation, almost to the subversion of this noble realme. It is sure too much pitty to heare or understand the things that have since that time chaunced and happened to this region. The profe thereof hath taught us all Englishmen the experience too lamentable of all good men to be considered. If eyes be not blind men may see, if eares be not stopped they may heare, and if pitty be not exiled the inwarde man may lament the sequell of this pernicious and inordinate love. Although it lasted but a while, the plague thereof is not yet ceased, which our Lorde quenche and take his indignation from us! qui peccavimus cum patribus nostris, et injuste egimus!" p. 420 and 421.

Not so Sir William Cavendish.

This passage, warm from the heart, could have been written by none but a zealous anti-reformist. That certainly was not Sir William Cavendish. He had been one of the principal instruments in effecting what was a necessary and glorious work, let our author say what he will against it. Men are not accustomed to record their own condemnation with such a bold, untrembling hand. That hand, which

is supposed to have penned these words, had been once extended to receive the conventual seal of the Priory of Sheen, and the Abbey of St. Alban's. The person by whom we are to believe they were written had been an officer in that court which was purposely erected to attend to the augmentation of the king's revenue by the sequestration of ecclesiastical property; the proceedings of which court were too often unnecessarily harsh and arbitrary, if not unjust and oppressive. Nay more, at the very time these words were written, Sir William Cavendish was living on the spoils of those very monasteries whose overthrow is so deeply deplored; and rearing out of them a magnificent mansion at Chatsworth in Derbyshire, to be the abode of himself and his posterity. After so long and so decided a passage, it has been thought unnecessary to quote any other: but throughout the work appears the same zeal in the writer to signalize himself as a friend to the old profession. May not this be considered as amounting to something almost conclusive against the supposition that the attendant upon Wolsey and Sir William Cavendish were the same person?

Sir William Cavendish did not change with the times.

Will it be said that he turned with the times; that he who, in the Protestant reigns, had been zealous for the *Gospel*, in the Catholic reign was equally zealous for the *Mass:* and that this work was his

amende to the offended party. I know not of any authority we have for charging this religious tergiversation upon Sir William Cavendish, who, for any thing that appears in his history, was animated by other views in promoting the cause of reform, than the desire of personal advancement, and of obtaining the favour of his prince: and I am prepared with two facts in his history, not mentioned by former writers, which are unfavourable to such a supposition. The first shows that he was in some disgrace at the court of Queen Mary as late as the fourth year of her reign; the second, that he did not seek to ingratiate himself there. On the 17th of August 1556, a very peremptory order of council was issued, commanding his "indelaid repaire" to the court to answer on "suche matters as at his cõmyng" should be declared unto him. The original, subscribed by seven of the Queen's council, is among the Wilson collections mentioned in the note at page 21. What the particular charges were it is not material to our argument to inquire. The next year also, the year in which he died, he ungraciously refused a loan of one hundred pounds required of him and other Derbyshire gentlemen by the Queen, when her majesty was in distress for money to carry on the French war. These facts show that though he was continued in the offices of

treasurer of the chamber and privy-counsellor, he was in no very high esteem with Queen Mary, nor sought to conciliate her favourable regards. To which we may add, that his lady, whose spirit and masculine understanding would probably give her very considerable influence in the deliberations of his mind, was through life a firm friend to the Reformation, and in high favour with Queen Elizabeth.

Whatever effect the preceding facts and argument may have had upon the reader's mind, there is a piece of evidence still to be brought out, which is more conclusive against the claim of Sir William Cavendish. Soon after the Cardinal was arrested at his house of Cawood in Yorkshire, Cavendish tells us that he resorted to his lord, "where he was sitting in a chaire, the tables being spred for him to goe to dinner. But as soone as he perceived me to come in, he fell out into suche a wofull lamentation, with suche ruthefull teares and watery eies, that it would have caused a flinty harte to mourne with him. And as I could I with others comforted him; but it would not be. For, quoth he, nowe I lament that I see this gentleman, (meaning me) how faithefull, how dilligent, and how painefull he hath served me, abandonning his owne country, *wife and children*, his house and family, his rest and

The author married and a father before 1530.

quietnesse, only to serve me, and I have nothinge to rewarde him for his highe merittes." p. 517.

Hence it appears that the Cavendish who wrote this work was married, and had a family, *probably* before he entered into the Cardinal's service, *certainly* while he was engaged in it. At what precise period he became a member of the Cardinal's household cannot be collected from his own writings. Grove says it was as early as 1519[15]; the Biographia tells us that the place was procured for him by his father, who died in 1524. This however is certain, that the first mention of himself, as one in attendance upon the Cardinal, is in the exceedingly curious account he has given of the means used to break the growing attachment between the Lord Percy and Anne Boleyn, in order to make way for the King. Cavendish was present when the Earl of Northumberland took his son to task. This must have been before the year 1527; for in that year the Lord Percy became himself Earl of Northumberland; and probably it was at least a twelvemonth before; for ere the old Earl's departure, a marriage had been concluded between Lord Percy and the Lady Mary Talbot[16]. In 1526 then, the

[15] Life and Times, &c. vol. iii. p. 98.

Mary, Countess of Northumberland.

[16] Though little ceremony, and probably as little time, was used in patching up these nuptials. As might be expected, they were

Cavendish who wrote this work was a member of Wolsey's household. Now, fortunately for this inquiry, it happens that an exact account has been preserved of the several marriages and the numerous issue of Sir William Cavendish. It is to be found in the funeral-certificate, which, according to a laudable custom of those times, was entered by his relict among the records of the College of Arms. This document, subscribed by her own hand, sets forth

Not so Sir William Cavendish.

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most unhappy. So we are told on the authority of the earl's own letters in the very laboured account of the Percy family given in the edition of Collins's Peerage, 1779, perhaps the best piece of family history in our language. "Henry, the unthrifty" Earl of Northumberland, died at Hackney in the prime of life, about ten or twelve years after he had consented to this marriage. Of this term but a very small part was spent in company of his lady. He lived long enough, however, not only to witness the destruction of all his own happiness, but the sad termination of Anne Boleyn's life. In the admirable account of the Percy family, referred to above, no mention is made of the lady who, on these terms, consented to become Countess of Northumberland, in her long widowhood. She sequestered herself from the world at Wormhill, on the banks of the Derbyshire Wye, amidst some of the sublimest scenery of the Peak. This interesting fact is collected from one of her letters to Lady Cavendish in the Wilson collection. It exhibits the recluse in an amiable character. She is pleading the cause of a poor neighbour whose cattle had been impounded by one of Lady Cavendish's agents. Wormhill is about eighteen miles from Sheffield, where Lady Northumberland's father, brother, and nephew, successively Earls of Shrewsbury, spent the greatest part of their lives. She died in 1572; and on the 17th of May her mortal remains were deposited in the vault made by her father in Sheffield church, where sleep so many noble personages, some of them in monumental honours.

that her husband's first-born child came into the world on the 7th of January, in the 25th year of King Henry VIII. This answers to 1534: that is at least seven years after the Cavendish, for whom we are inquiring, had become a member of Wolsey's family, and more than three years after the Cardinal had remarked that his gentleman usher had left "wife and children, his home and family, his rest and quietnesse," only to serve him. This is decisive.

The funeral-certificate where to be found.

The document which contains these family-particulars of the Cavendishes is not known only to those gentlemen who have access to the arcana of the College of Arms. It has been published: and it is remarkable that Arthur Collins, who has been a principal cause of the error concerning the author of this work gaining such firm hold on the public mind, should have been the first to lay before the public a record which proves beyond dispute that the Cavendish who wrote the life of Wolsey could not be the Cavendish who was the progenitor of the house of Devonshire. It is printed in his 'Noble Families,' where is a more complete account of the Cavendishes than is to be found in his Peerage, and which might have been transferred with advantage into the later editions of that work. This document has also been printed by Guthrie

and Jacobs, whose account of the nobility of this nation may often be consulted with advantage, after having read any of the editions of Collins. Of its *authenticity*, the only point material to this inquiry, no suspicion can reasonably be entertained.

We have now brought to a conclusion our inquiry into the right of the *tenant in possession*. It has been questioned, examined, and, I think, disproved. It is not contended that the common opinion respecting Sir William Cavendish's attendance upon Wolsey does not harmonize well enough with what is known of his real history, and to render our proof absolutely complete it might seem to be almost incumbent upon us to show how Sir William Cavendish was engaged while Wolsey's biographer was discharging the duties of his office as an attendant upon the Cardinal. Could we do this, we should also disclose the steps by which he attained to his honourable state employments, and the favour of successive monarchs. In the absence of positive testimony I would be permitted to hazard the conjecture, that, in early life, he followed the steps of his father, who had an office in the court of Exchequer. Such an education as he would receive in that court would render him a most fit instrument for the purpose in which we first find his services used, the suppression of the monasteries, and the

How the early years of Sir William Cavendish may have been spent.

appropriation of the lands belonging to them to his royal master. Having signalized his zeal, and given proof of his ability in this service, so grateful to the King, we may easily account for his further employments, and the promotions and rewards which followed them. Let it however be observed, that this is no essential part of our argument; nor shall I pursue the inquiry any further, mindful of the well known and sage counsel of the Lord Chancellor Bacon.

I would however be permitted to say something on that very extraordinary woman, the lady of Sir William Cavendish, and the sharer with him in raising the family to that state of affluence and honour in which we now behold it. Indeed she was a more than equal sharer. He laid the foundation, she raised the superstructure; as she finished the family palace at Chatsworth, of which he had laid the first stone.

His lady an extraordinary character.

This lady was Elizabeth Hardwick, a name familiar to all visitors of the county of Derby, where she lived more than half a century with little less than sovereign authority, having first adorned it with two most splendid mansions. The daughter, and the virgin widow of two Derbyshire gentlemen of moderate estates, she first stepped into consequence by her marriage with Sir William Cavendish,

a gentleman much older than herself. The ceremony was performed at the house of the Marquis of Dorset[17], father to the Lady Jane Grey, who, with the Countess of Warwick and the Earl of Shrewsbury, was a sponsor at the baptism of her second child. Cavendish left her a widow with six children in 1557. Shortly after his death she united herself to Sir William St. Lowe, one of the old attendants of the Princess Elizabeth, on whose accession to the throne he was made captain of her guard. In 1567, being a third time a widow, she was raised to the bed of the most powerful peer of the realm, George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. He had been a friend of Sir William Cavendish, and it is possible that the magnificent state which he displayed in the immediate neighbourhood of this lady had more than once excited her envy. She loved pomp and magnificence and personal splendour, as much as she enjoyed the hurry and engagement of mind which multiplied worldly business brings with it. She had a passion for jewels, which was appealed to and gratified by the unhappy Mary Queen of Scotland[18], who lived many years under the care of

Marries Sir William St. Lowe;

becomes Countess of Shrewsbury.

Has a present of jewels from Mary Queen of Scots.

[17] Broadgate in Leicestershire. See the Funeral Certificate. They were married on the 20th Aug. 1 Edw. VI., at two o'clock after midnight.

[18] Among the Wilson collection is a list of jewels presented to the Countess of Shrewsbury by the Queen of Scotland.

the Earl of Shrewsbury, her husband. She united herself to this nobleman more, as it should seem, from motives of ambition, than as the consequence of any real affection she had for him. He had unquestionably the sincerest regard for her: and, though she forgot many of the duties of a wife, it continued many years in the midst of all that reserve and perfidy, and even tyranny, if such a word may be allowed, which she thought proper to exercise towards him. The decline of this good and great man's life affords a striking lesson how utterly insufficient are wealth and splendour and rank to secure happiness even in a case where there is no experience of the more extraordinary vicissitudes of fortune, the peculiar danger of persons in elevated situations. Probably the happiest days of the last three and twenty years of his life were those in which he was employing himself in preparing his own sepulchre. This he occupied in 1590. But the effect of his ill-advised nuptials extended beyond his life. His second countess had drawn over to her purposes some of his family, who had assisted her in the designs she carried on against her husband. She had drawn them closely to her interest by alliances with her own family. Hence arose family animosities, which appeared in the most frightful forms, and threatened the most deadly conse-

Death of the Earl.

sequences[19]. Much may be seen respecting this extraordinary woman in the Talbot Papers published by Mr. Lodge. A bundle of her private correspondence has been preserved, and forms a curious and valuable part of that collection of manuscripts which we have had occasion more than once to mention. These let in much light upon her conduct. It is impossible to contemplate her character in this faithful mirror without being convinced that Mr. Lodge has drawn the great outlines of it correctly, when he describes her as "a woman of masculine understanding and conduct; proud, furious, selfish, and unfeeling[20]." Yet she was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, who paid her this compliment soon after her last marriage, that "she had been glad to see my Lady Saint Lowe, but was more desirous to see my Lady Shrewsbury, and that there was no lady in the land whom she better loved and liked." These flattering expressions were used to Mr. Wingfield, who was a near relation of this lady, and who lost no time in reporting them to her. His letter forms a part of the collection just mentioned. Most of these letters are

Mr. Lodge's character of her.

Anecdote of Queen Elizabeth.

[19] See "Memoirs of the Peers of England during the Reign of James the First," p. 19. Lodge's "Illustrations," &c. iii. 50—64. and Harl. MSS. in Brit. Mus. No. 4836. fol. 325. and 6846. fol. 97.

[20] "Illustrations," &c. Introd. p. 17.

upon private affairs: a few only are from persons whom she had engaged to send her the news of the day, as was usual with the great people of that age when absent from court. There are several of the letters which she received from Saint Lowe and Shrewsbury, which show how extraordinary was the influence she had gained over their minds. There is one from Sir William Cavendish. Having laboured to show what the knight did *not* compose, I shall transcribe in the note below this genuine fragment of his writing, though in no respect worthy of publication, except as having passed between these two remarkable characters[91]. It is expressed in a strain of familiarity to which neither of his *uxorious* successors ever dared aspire. To conclude the history of this lady, she survived her last husband about seventeen years, which were spent for the most part at Hardwick, the place of her birth, and where she had built the present noble mansion.

Letters to her.

Original Letter of Sir William Cavendish.

[91] To Besse Cavendysh
my wyff.

Good Besse, haveing forgotten to wryght in my letters that you shuld pay Otewell Alayne eight pounds for certayne otys that we have bought of hym ov^r^ and above x^li^ that I have paid to hym in hand, I hertely pray you for that he is desyrus to receyve the rest at London, to pay hym uppon the sight hereof. You knowe my store and therefore I have appoyntyd hym to have it at yo^r^ hands. And thus faer you well. From Chattesworth the xiii^th^ of Aprell.

W.C.

There she died in 1607, and was interred in the great church at Derby.

The courteous reader will, it is hoped, pardon this digression: and now set we forth on the second stage of our inquiry, Who wrote Cavendish's Life of Wolsey?

Claim of Thomas Cavendish.

When there are only two claimants upon any property, if the pretensions of one can be shown to be groundless, those of the other seem to be established as a necessary consequence. But here we have a third party. Beside Sir William and his elder brother George, a claimant has been found in a *Thomas* Cavendish. In the account of Wolsey given in the Athenæ[99], Wood calls the author by this name: and Dodd, a Catholic divine, who published a Church History of England in 3 vols. folio, (Brussels 1737.) in a list of historians and manuscripts used in the preparation of his work, enumerates "Cavendish *Thomas*, Life of Cardinal Wolsey, Lond. 1590." It is very probable that Dodd may have contented himself with copying the name of this author from the Athenæ, a book he used: and it is with the utmost deference, and the highest possible respect, for the wonderful industry and the extraordinary exactness of the Oxford an-

[99] Ath. Oxon. vol. i. col. 569. ed. 1691.

tiquary, I would intimate my opinion that, in this instance, he has been misled. To subject the pretensions of *Thomas* Cavendish to such a scrutiny as that to which those of Sir William have been brought is quite out of the question: for neither Wood nor Dodd have afforded us any light upon his history or character. He appears before us like Homer, *nomen, et præterea nihil.* There was a person of both his names, of the Grimstone family, a noted navigator, and an author in the days of Queen Elizabeth; but he lived much too late to have ever formed a part of the household of Cardinal Wolsey.

We must now state the evidence in favour of George Cavendish. The reader will judge for himself whether the testimony of Anthony Wood, and that of the Catholic church-historian, supposing them to be distinct and independent testimonies, is sufficient to outweigh what is to be advanced in support of George Cavendish's claim. We shall first state on what grounds the work is attributed to a Cavendish whose name was George; and secondly, the reasons we have for believing that he was the George Cavendish of Glemsford in Suffolk, to whom my Lord Herbert ascribes the work.

That the writer's name was George.

On the former point the evidence is wholly external. It lies in a small compass; but it is of great

weight. It consists in the testimony of all the ancient manuscripts which bear any title of an even date with themselves[23]: and in that of the learned herald and antiquary Francis Thinne, a contemporary of the author's, who, in the list of writers of English history which he subjoined to Hollinshead's Chronicle, mentions "George Cavendish, Gentleman Vsher vnto Cardinal Woolseie, whose life he did write."

Four circumstances of the author's condition discovered in the work.

Now to our second point. Four circumstances of the author's situation are discovered to us in the work itself; viz. that his life was extended through the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Queen Mary; that while he was in the Cardinal's service he was a married man, and had a family: that he was in but moderate circumstances when he composed this memoir; and that he retained a zeal for the *old profession* of religion. If we find these circumstances concurring in a George Cavendish, it is probable we have found the person for whom we are in search.

Original title of the work.

[23] None of the publishers of this work have given us the original title. I shall here transcribe it as it appears upon the manuscript in the library of the College of Arms.

Thomas Wolsey, late Cardinall intituled of S^t^ Cicile trans Tiberim presbyter and Lord Chauncellar of England, his lyfe and deathe, compiled by George Cavendishe, his gentleman Usher.

Scanty as is the information afforded us concerning a simple esquire of the days of the Tudors, it will probably be made apparent that these circumstances do concur in the person to whom my Lord Herbert ascribes the work. Men of little celebrity in their lives, and whose track through the world cannot be discovered by the light of history, are sometimes found attaining a faint and obscure "life after death" in the herald's visitation books and the records of the attorney. Those rolls of immortality are open to every man. They transmit to a remote posterity the worthless and the silly with as much certainty as the name of one who was instinct with the fire of genius, and whom a noble ambition to be good and great distinguished from the common herd of men. It is in these rolls only that the name of George Cavendish of Glemsford is come down to us: he forms a link in the pedigree: he is a medium in the transmission of manorial property.

Obscurity of George Cavendish a presumption in his favour.

But this very obscurity creates a presumption in favour of his claim. What employment that should raise him into notice would be offered in the days of Henry and Edward to the faithful and affectionate attendant upon a character so unpopular among the great as the haughty, low-born Wolsey? What should have placed his name upon public record who did not, like Cromwell and some other of Wol-

sey's domestics, "find himself a way out of his master's wreck to rise in" by throwing himself upon the court, but retired, as Cavendish at the conclusion of the Memoirs tells us he did, to his own estate in the country, with his wages, a small gratuity, and a present of six of the Cardinal's horses to convey his furniture? That, living at a distance from the court, he should have been overlooked on the change of the times, cannot be surprising: he was only one among many who would have equal claims upon Mary and her ministry. Had she lived indeed till his work had been published, we might then reasonably have expected to have seen a man of so much virtue and talent, and religious zeal, drawn from his obscurity, and his name might have been as well known to our history as his brother's, the reformist. But Mary died too soon for his hopes and those of many others of his party, though not too soon for the interests of religion and humanity. All expectation of seeing the admirer and apologist of Wolsey emerge from his obscurity must end with the accession of the protestant princess Elizabeth.

What is known of George Cavendish of Glemsford.

It is therefore not surprising, and on the whole rather favourable to our argument, that nearly all which can now be collected of George Cavendish of Glemsford is contained in the following passage

extracted from certain " Notices of the manor of Cavendish in Suffolk, and of the Cavendish family while possessed of that manor," which was communicated to the Society of Antiquaries by Thomas Ruggles, Esq., the owner of the said manor[24]. Cavendish, it will be recollected, is a manor adjoining to Glemsford, and which belonged to the same parties.

George Cavendish is stated to be the eldest son of Thomas Cavendish, Esq. who was clerk of the pipe in the Exchequer. He " was in possession of the manor of Cavendish Overhall, and had two sons; William was the eldest, to whom, in the fourth year of Philip and Mary, 1558, he granted by deed enrolled in Chancery this manor in fee, on the said William releasing to his father one annual payment of twenty marks, and covenanting to pay him yearly for life, at the site of the mansion-house of Spains-hall, in the parish of Finchingfield, in the county of Essex, forty pounds, at the four usual quarterly days of payment. When George Cavendishe died is uncertain: but it is apprehended in 1561 or 1562.

" William Cavendishe his son was in possession of the manor in the fourth year of Elizabeth."....

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[24] Archæologia, vol. xi. p. 50—62.

" He was succeeded in this estate by his son William Cavendysh of London, mercer, who by that description, and reciting himself to be the son of William Cavendishe, gentleman, deceased, by deed dated the 25th of July, in the eleventh year of the reign of Elizabeth, 1569, released all his right and title to this estate, and to other lands lying in different parishes, to William Downes of Sudbury, in Suffolk, Esq."

His fortune decayed.

This detail plainly intimates that decay of the consequence and circumstances of a family which we might expect from the complaints in the Memoirs of Wolsey, of the unequal dealings of fortune, and of the little reward all the writer's "painfull diligence" had received. We see George Cavendish, for a small annual payment in money, giving up the ancient inheritance of his family, a manor *called after his own name:* and only eleven years after, that very estate passed to strangers to the name and blood of the Cavendishes by his grandson and next heir, who was engaged in trade in the city of London. We find also what we have the concurrent testimony of the heralds of that time to prove, that this George Cavendish was married, and the father of sons: but on a closer inspection we find more than this: we discover that he must have been married as early as 1526, when we first

Married before 1526.

find the biographer of Wolsey a member of the Cardinal's household[95]. William Cavendish the younger, grandson to George Cavendish, must have been of full age before he could convey the estate of his forefathers. He was born therefore as early as 1548. If from this we take a presumed age of his father at the time of his birth, we shall arrive at this conclusion, that George Cavendish the grandfather was a family-man at least as early as 1526.

A Catholic.

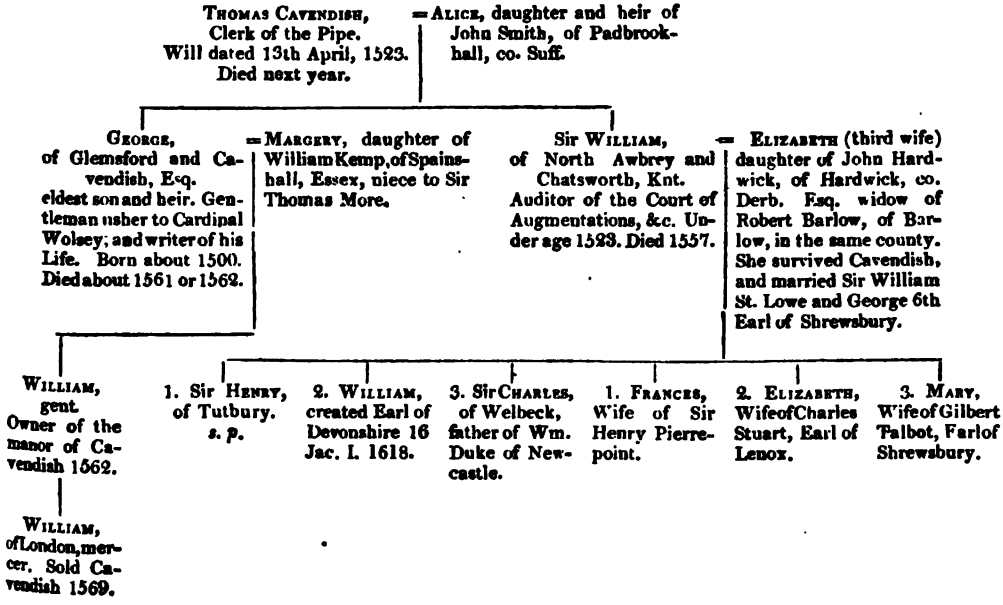
To another point, namely, the religious profession of this Suffolk gentleman, our proof, it must be allowed, is not so decisive. I rely, however, with some confidence upon this fact, for which we are indebted to the heralds, that *he was nearly allied to Sir Thomas More*, the idol of the Catholic party in his own time, and the object of just respect with good men in all times, Margery his wife being a daughter of William Kemp of Spains-hall, in Essex, Esq. by Mary Colt his wife, sister to Jane, first wife of the Chancellor[96]. Indeed it seems as if the Kemps, in whose house the latter days of this George Cavendish were spent, were of the old profession. The extraordinary penance to which one of this family subjected himself savours strongly of habits and

[95] See page 27.

[96] See Vincent's Suffolk. MS. in Col. Arm. fol. 149. and compare with Morant's Essex, vol. ii. p. 363, and with the account of the Cavendishes in the Peerages.

opinions generated by the Roman Catholic system. It is perhaps unnecessary, in the last place, to remind the reader, that what Mr. Ruggles has discovered to us of the owner of Cavendish shows that his life was extended through the reigns of the second, third, and fourth monarchs of the house of Tudor: now the family pedigrees present us with no other George Cavendish of whom this is the truth. And here the case is closed. Lived in the three reigns.

It has been thought proper to annex the following genealogical table, which exhibits the relationship subsisting among the several members of the house of Cavendish whose names have been mentioned in the preceding treatise. Genealogy.



Origin of the mistaken appropriation of this work.

Supposing that the reader is convinced by the preceding evidence and arguments, that this work could not be the production of Sir William Cavendish, and that he was not the faithful attendant upon Cardinal Wolsey, I shall give him credit for a degree of curiosity to know how it happened that a story so far from the truth gained possession of the public mind, and established itself in so many works of acknowledged authority. That desire I shall be able to gratify, and will detain him but a little while longer, when the disclosure has been made of a process by which error has grown up to the exclusion of truth, in which it will be allowed that there is something of curiosity and interest. Error, like rumour, often appears *parva metu primò*, but, like her also, *vires acquirit eundo*. So it has been in the present instance. What was at first advanced with all the due modesty of probability and conjecture, was repeated by another person as something nearer to certain truth: soon every thing which intimated that it was only conjecture became laid aside, and it appeared with the broad bold front in which we now behold it.

Kennet.

The father of this misconception was no other than Dr. White Kennet. In 1708, being then only Archdeacon of Huntingdon, this eloquent divine published a sermon he had delivered in the great church at Derby, at the funeral of William the

first Duke of Devonshire. Along with it he gave to the world Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish, in which nothing was omitted that, in his opinion, might tend to set off his subject to the best advantage. He lauds even the Countess of Shrewsbury, and this at a time when he was called to contemplate the virtues and all womanly perfections of Christian Countess of Devonshire. It was not to be expected that he should forget the disinterested attendant upon Wolsey, and the ingenious memorialist of that great man's rise and fall; whose work had then recently been given to the public in a third edition. After reciting from it some particulars of Cavendish's attendance upon the Cardinal, and especially noticing his faithful adherence to him when others of his domestics had fled to find a sun not so near its setting, he concludes in these words: "To give a more lasting testimony of his gratitude to the Cardinal, he drew up a fair account of his life and death, of which the oldest copy is in the hands of the noble family of Pierpoint, into which the author's daughter was married: for *without express authority we may gather from circumstances*, that this very writer was the head of the present family; the same person with the immediate founder of the present noble family, William Cavendish of Chatsworth, com. Derb. Esq." p. 63.

Collins.

The editors of the Peerages, ever attentive to any disclosure that may add dignity to the noble families whose lives and actions are the subjects of their labours, were not unmindful of this discovery made by the learned Archdeacon. The book so popular in this country under the name of Collins's Peerage, was published by the industrious and highly-respectable Arthur Collins, then a bookseller at the Black Boy in Fleet-street, in a single volume, in the year 1709. In the account of the Devonshire family no more is said of Sir William Cavendish than had been told by Dugdale, and than is the undoubted truth[27]. But when, in 1712, a new edition appeared, we find added to the account of Sir William Cavendish all that the Archdeacon had said of Mr. Cavendish, the attendant upon Wolsey; but with this remarkable difference, arising probably in nothing more blameworthy than inattention, that while Kennet had written "for *without* express authority we may gather from circumstances, &c." Collins says, "for *with* express authority we may gather from circumstances, &c.[28]" A third edition appeared in 1715, in two volumes, in which no change is made in the Cavendish article[29]. In 1735 the Peerage had assumed a higher character, and

[27] See page 84. [28] Ibid. p. 100. [29] Vol. i. p. 106.

appeared with the arms engraven on copper-plates, in four handsome octavo volumes. In this edition we find the whole article has been recomposed; and we no longer hear of the *gathering from circumstances*, or the *with* or *without* express authority; but the account of Sir William Cavendish's connexion with the Cardinal is told with all regularity, dovetailed with authentic particulars of his life, forming a very compact and, seemingly, consistent story[30]. The only material change that has been introduced in the successive editions of a work which has been so often revised and reprinted, has arisen from the discovery made by some later editor, that my Lord Herbert had quoted the work as the production of a George Cavendish. The gentle editors were not however to be deprived of what tended in their opinion so much to the credit of the house of Cavendish, and rendered the account they had to give of its founder so much more satisfactory. Without ceremony, therefore, they immediately put down the quotation to the inaccuracy and inattention of that noble author.

Having once gained an establishment in a work The Biographia.

[30] Vol. i. p. 122. It is singular enough that in this edition the name of the Cardinal's attendant and biographer, by a slip of the pen, is written *George*. See line 38. It is plain from the connexion that this must have been an unintended blunder into the truth. It was duly corrected in the later editions.

so highly esteemed and so widely dispersed, and carrying a *primâ facie* appearance of truth, it is easy to see how the error would extend itself, especially as in this country the number of persons is so small who attend to questions of this nature, and as the means of correcting it were not so obvious as since the publication of the "Ecclesiastical Biography." But it assumed its most dangerous consequence by its introduction into the Biographia. The greatest blemish of that extremely valuable collection of English lives, seems to be the loading its pages with stale genealogy taken from the commonest of our books. Wherever Collins afforded them information, the writers of that work have most gladly accepted of it, and have

> "——— whisper'd whence they stole
> Their balmy sweets,"

by using in many instances his own words. His facts they seem to have generally assumed as indubitable. In the present instance nothing more was done than to new-mould the account given of Sir William Cavendish in the later editions of the Peerage, and, by an unprofitable generalization of the language, to make his mixture of truth and fable more palatable to the taste of their readers.

Bragg the bookseller.

Poor Arthur Collins was not the only bookseller who took advantage of the learned archdeacon's

unfortunate conjecture. There was one Bragg, a printer, at the Blue Ball in Ave Maria Lane, a man of no very high character in his profession, who published in 1706 an edition of Cavendish's Life of Wolsey, taken from the second edition by Dorman Newman, and with all the errors and omissions of that most unfaithful impression. Copies were remaining upon his shelves when Kennet's sermon made its appearance. Rightly judging that this must cause inquiries to be made after a book, the production of one who was the progenitor of a person and family at that particular period, from a concurrence of circumstances, the subject of universal conversation, he cancelled the anonymous title-page of the remaining copies, and issued what he called a "Second Edition," with a long Grub-street title beginning thus:

Sir William Cavendish's
Memoirs of the Life of Cardinal Woolsey,
&c.

This has sometimes been mistaken for a really new edition of the work.

Editions of the work.

And having thus mentioned an edition, it may not be improper to add a few words on the impressions which have been issued of this curious biographical fragment. Till Dr. Wordsworth favoured the public with his "Ecclesiastical Biography,"

what was before the public of this work was rather an abridgement than the genuine work. But even in its mutilated form it was always popular, and the copies were marked at considerable prices in the booksellers' catalogues.

The first edition, it is believed, is that in 4to, London, 1641, for William Sheeres, with the title "The Negotiations of Thomas Woolsey, the great Cardinall of England, &c. composed by one of his own Servants, being his Gentleman-Usher." The second was in 12mo, London, 1667, for Dorman Newman, and is entitled "The Life and Death of Thomas Woolsey, Cardinal, &c. written by one of his own Servants, being his Gentleman-Usher." The third is the one just mentioned in 8vo, London, 1706, for B. Bragg, and having for its title "The Memoirs of that great Favourite Cardinal Woolsey, &c." It is supposed that it was first made public in order to provoke a comparison between Wolsey and the unpopular Archbishop Laud. These are the only editions known to the writer.

It is printed in the form of notes to Grove's History of the Life and Times of Cardinal Wolsey, again in the Harleian Miscellany, and in the selection from that work. And last of all, it forms a most valuable part of the "Ecclesiastical Biography" published by Dr. Wordsworth.

It must not however be concealed that mention has been made of a still earlier edition than any of those above described. Bishop Nicolson, in his English Historical Library[31], asserts that it was published at London in 4to, 1590; and in this he is followed by Dodd the Catholic historian. Nicolson's authority is not very high in respect of bibliographical information; and there is great reason to believe that he has here described an edition to be found only in the *Bibliotheca abscondita* of Sir Thomas Brown. This however is certain, that the commentators on Shakspeare are agreed, that though the labours of Cavendish must have been known in part to our great dramatist, he has followed them so closely in many of his scenes, it could have been only by a perusal of them in manuscript, or by the ample quotations made from them in the pages of Hollinshead and Stowe. Mr. Malone indeed expressly affirms that they were not sent to the press before 1641. The earliest edition known to the editor of the Censura Literaria, whose intimate acquaintance with early English literature every one acknowledges, and whose attention has been peculiarly drawn to this work, was of that date. The catalogues, published and unpublished, of most of

The supposed edition of 1590.

[31] 4to, 1776, p. 116.

our principal libraries have been consulted, and no earlier edition than that of 1641 found in any one of them. It appears therefore, on the whole, most probable that though there are undoubtedly black-letter stores, which the diligence of modern bibliomaniacs has not brought to light, no such edition exists as that which the author of the English Historical Library tells us was published in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and during the height of the persecutions which she authorized against the Catholics. Under this persuasion the preceding sheets have been composed.

It is possible that Bishop Nicolson may have been misled by another work on the same subject; The Aspiring, Triumph, and Fall of Wolsey, by Thomas Storer, Student of Christ Church. This appeared in *quarto*, 1599.

Conclusion. The writer now lays down his pen with something like a persuasion that it will be allowed he has proved his two points,—that Sir William Cavendish of Chatsworth could not have been the author of the Life of Wolsey, and that we owe the work to his brother George Cavendish of Glemsford. It results also as a corollary, that the foundation of the present grandeur of the house of Cavendish was not laid, as is commonly understood, in an attendance upon Cardinal Wolsey, and in certain fa-

vourable circumstances connected with that service. The inquiry, even in all its bearings, like many other literary inquiries, cannot be considered as of very high importance. The writer will not however affect to insinuate that he considers it as of no consequence. In works so universally consulted as the Biographia and the Peerages, it is desirable that no errors of any magnitude should remain undetected and unexposed. Error begets error, and truth begets truth: nor can any one say how much larger in both cases may be the offspring than the sire. I do not indeed scruple to acknowledge, that, though not without a relish for inquiries which embrace objects of far greater magnitude, and a disposition justly to appretiate their value, I should be thankful to the man who should remove my uncertainty, as to whose countenance was concealed by the *Masque de Fer*, or would tell me whether Richard was the hunch-backed tyrant, and Harry "the nimble-footed mad-cap" exhibited by our great dramatist; whether Charles wrote the Εικων Βασιλικη, and Lady Packington "The Whole Duty of Man." Not that I would place this humble disquisition on a level with the inquiries which have been instituted and so learnedly conducted into these several questions. In one material point, however, even this disquisition may challenge an equality with them.

There is a much nearer approach made to *certainty* than in the discussions of any of the abovementioned so much greater questions.

There are amongst readers of books some persons whose minds being every moment occupied in the contemplation of objects of the highest importance, look down with contempt upon the naturalist at his *leucophræ*, the critic at his μεν and δε work, the astronomer at his *nebulæ*, and the toiling antiquary at every thing. One word to these gentlemen before we part. To them may be recommended the words of a writer of our own day, a man of a most enlarged and highly-cultivated mind :—

" He who determines with certainty a single species of the minutest moss, or meanest insect, adds so far to the general stock of human knowledge, which is more than can be said of many a celebrated name. No one can tell of what importance that simple fact may be to future ages : and when we consider how many millions of our fellow-creatures pass through life without furnishing a single atom to augment that stock, we shall learn to think with more respect of those who do."

THE END.

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